The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news, economic and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the labor, trial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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YOUR UNION LABELS, CARDS AND BUTTONS INSURE YOUR JOBS

WHOLE NO. 1865 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1947 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 37, NO. 1

CROSS SECTION--AFL

Washington, D. C.—Collective bargaining is the major key for averting industrial disputes, Robert Watt, international representative of the American Federation of Labor, declared in the opening of the 39-week series of Saturday radio programs entitled "Cross Section—USA."

Mr. Watt was joined in the labor-management discussion by Edgar L. Warren, Director of Conciliation of the U. S. Labor Department; Lee H. Bickmore, president of the McCormick Company of Baltimore, and Fred Bailey, of the National Grange.

Mr. Watt declared that the question of worker-management relations, if left to employers and workers, "leaves no room for government." "Government cannot work out their own problems. After all, we have, right now, approximately 20,000 contracts that have been worked out. And there is no reason to believe we can't solve our further problems.

"Profit-sharing is an important element of the collective bargaining process in relation to a plant. But I don't think you can just simply make a general statement on it, any more than you can make a general statement on wages, and say it is 25 or 30 percent, or that every plant in the nation should have profit sharing. I am opposed to such general statements."

"I don't want the government to step in and say 'this is what the employe will earn, and these are the number of hours he will work, and these are the conditions under which he will be employed. What I want to emphasize is the need for the employer and the union to work out their understanding at the plant level."

Mr. McCormick, speaking for management, said:

"I would like to say that management ought to take a trusteeship attitude. Faith has got to come back and displace fear psychology."

"The entire economy of the nation," Mr. Warren said, "depends upon the peaceful settlement of labor disputes. I would urge that public interest requires both management and labor to settle their differences with a minimum of interference with the lives of their neighbors and the public."

In a further discussion of the present industrial labor picture, Mr. Warren said:

"This new year has begun quite auspiciously. Last year almost a million men were idle as a result of industrial strife. Today less than 100,000 are idle as the result of work stoppages.

"Last year the picture was uncertain and confused, but today, without any government restraints, restrictions have been cast aside, and I believe the picture is much more reassuring.

"I think we could all agree that we believe in a free enterprise system. And I, for one, believe that permanent peace can be established between employers and unions by collective bargaining, and that there is no need for intervention by government order.

"I fully concur in the view of Mr. McCormick that we should look at the future with faith. I think that is of the utmost importance."

Speaking for the farmers, Fred Bailey said: "It is highly important to the farm population to have "a good working relationship between labor and industry." He expressed great fear, however, of difficult times ahead in the labor field and added "it is going to take a lot of level heads to avert misunderstandings."

AFL Chiefs Challenge U. S. Assistance To Red Influence In German Unions

Washington, D. C.—Leaders of the American Federation of Labor plan to present soon to Secretary of State James Byrnes further vigorous protests against the recent action of the military government zonal manpower division chiefs in Germany and in Washington in forcing the WFTU and the affiliation of German trade unions with the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Telegrams of sharp protest already have been forwarded to Secretary of State Byrnes and Secretary of War Patterson by George Meany, Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL, and Matthew Woll, chairman of the AFL International Labor Relations Department.

The AFL has declined to join the WFTU, on grounds that it includes Russian trade unions and others that are not democratic organizations and under government domination.

The AFL has charged that the meeting of the manpower chiefs in Paris with the WFTU was a new Soviet political move "to stampede German trade unions into affiliation with the WFTU and in a "desperate attempt by the Kremlin to grab control of organized labor in Germany after its maneuver of creating the so-called Socialist Unity party had failed miserably."

Mr. Meany and Mr. Woll said in their messages to Secretaries Byrnes and Patterson that they were opposing vigorously to the "arrangements" of the manpower chiefs, and added:

"We urgently request your department to investigate who authorized this action by American representatives abroad without instructions from the State and War Departments and without consulting the AFL, which is the recognized representative of the organized labor movement in this country. Byrnes further vigorously protests against the recent action of the military governments in supporting the rebirth of genuine free trade unionism and the growth of democracy in Germany long before Moscow even conceived the WFTU as a new Red labor union international.

"The AFL brands this action as harmful to the best interests of the American people, to world democracy and peace because the WFTU is nothing but the Kremlin's world-wide fifth column.

"We protest the action of the two military governors to decide whether and when German trade unions should affiliate with any international organization and to determine there is a central German government administration and German trade unions or any national organization will they themselves be permitted to participate in the decision terminating freely questions of foreign affiliations.

"The AFL warns against the reported plan to force into this trap for struggling German trade unions the reactionary elements from the coming them Moscow pawns. We firmly believe that the German Trade Unions and strongly urge your department to immediately correct this situation.

The AFL also will protest to President Truman and will submit evidence of alleged discrimination against United States labor unions in the matter of printed literature to Germans in the United States zone.

Green Appeals to Employer Groups To Strengthen Collective Bargaining

Washington, D. C.—A strong plea to industry to join labor in efforts to strengthen the collective bargaining method was sounded by AFL President William Green in a special radio address, title as the American Federation of Labor official magazine of the American Federation of Labor.

Warning against "emitting the American economy to be controlled by the dictator," Mr. Green declared that neither management nor labor desires that type of system in this country.

Urging Green's views were contained in an editorial titled "Not Compulsion, But Cooperation" in which he urged the management to supply responsible with many of the benefits needed for collective bargaining.

"If we would maintain our American way of life," Mr. Green wrote, "we must maintain the democratic methods of management through collective bargaining. We must substitute cooperation for coercion in the operation of home, we cannot promote democracy throughout the United Nations."

The AFL leader chided those who said, for a law to be enacted "to force workers," asserting that such proposals come from persons and groups which have failed to consider that democracy can not exist for any group will inevitably lead to compulsion for all."

"Neither management nor labor wants an economy controlled by the government, for that economy controlled by politics, with continuous political interference in collective bargaining," Mr. Green declared.

"Political intervention kills collective bargaining and slows down progress for workers.

"There is no compromise between these two policies.

"Having to get through strikes is one of the evils of freedom. Nor is there a policy of doing nothing. On the contrary, it brings direct responsibility for strengthening collective bargaining."

Mr. Green, in addition to calling upon management to provide workers with some GOP group, preparatory to quick action by the Senate Labor Committee. Senator Ball, Republican, of Minnesota, a coauthor of the draft, is understood to be scheduled to testify on "best practices in collective bargaining" before the Taft-Ball-Smith conciliation Service needed funds for its expanded responsibilities.

The AFL head declared that, if there is to be a general peace, both labor and management must live up to their obligations as set forth in the contracts they sign.

MINERS PLAN HOSPITAL

Louisville, Ky.—A hospital to serve the general public as well as miners is being planned here by District 30 of the United Mine Workers (AFL).

PRINTERS WIN RAISE

Rochester, N. Y.—Printers' scales were raised from $65 to $79 for night work and from $58 to $74 a week for day work under terms of a new agreement reached on daily papers here.

TRUMAN ASKS CONGRESS FOR WELFARE AGENCY TO GUARD NATION'S HEALTH

Washington, D. C.—Establishment of a Department of Welfare, with Cabinet rank, was proposed by President Truman in his State of the Union message to the 80th session of Congress.

"Of all our national resources," the President told Congress, "none of it is of more basic value than the health of our people.

"Over a year ago I presented to Congress my views on the national health program. Congress acted on several of the recommendations I then proposed, and I urge this Congress to complete the work begun last year on this subject."

FARM LABOR UNION OPENS CONVENTION IN CAPITAL JAN. 13

Washington, D. C.—Plans of the National Farm Labor Union, new affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, to open a national convention January 13 were announced at AFL headquarters here.

The reason for transfer of its locale to the National Capital from such earlier convention cities as Cotton Belt, Ark., and Memphis, Tenn., was "to see if we couldn't get right under the noses of the 80th Congress and get them to do something about the existence of such laws as the Taft-Hartley Act, the Labor Relations Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act and other laws according to H. L. Mitchell, president of the union.

The AFL pledged its support to such a legislative program at its October convention in Chicago.

"Another national problem which we as a union are almost powerless to solve," the spokesman continued, "is that of displacement of men by machines in the farms. Unless Congress acts speedily, the 2,000,000 people who will be put out of cotton production by the cotton-picking machine can expect the migration of the nation's whole economy. For example, there is a tremendous housing shortage in the cotton plantations while elsewhere housing is not to be found."

AFL President William Green and Senator George Aiken, of Vermont, will be among the speakers at the convention, scheduled for AFL to be held at the Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church.

The bulk of the union's 150 convention delegates will be from the South and will represent the cotton sharecroppers, farm hands who founded the organization, then known as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, in 1934. Other delegates are expected from El Paso, Tex., where Latin-American migrant farm workers have been organized through the new Citrus Workers Union in Florida. Truck farm workers from the commercialized farms of New Jersey will also be represented at the convention.

The convention will last three days, concluding with Mr. Green's address, which will be broadcast over the AFL-Nation's wide CBS network at 6:15 p.m., January 15.

TRUCK DRIVERS GET RAISE

Chicago, Ill.—A new contract has been signed by truck operators and drivers involving 14,000 union drivers in the metropolitan area here. It will be effective until December 31, 1948, and provides for improved vacation benefits, a guaranteed 40-hour work week and time-and-a-half overtime pay, which will, in effect, raise the average drivers pay about $20 a week.

Represented in the negotiations were Locals 705, 743 and 781 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (AFL).

Truman Offers Congress 4-Point Plan To Promote Greater Industrial Peace

Green Appraises Truman Message

Washington, D. C.—Text of AFL President William Green's comments upon President Truman's address to a joint session of Congress on the State of the Union follows:

The objectives sought by President Truman in his recommendations to Congress on the promotion of greater harmony between labor and management should be endorsed by all the American people.

The need for a greater measure of industrial peace is obvious. Early and ill-considered action by Congress in regard to labor will accomplish more harm than good.

The American Federation of Labor will give careful and sympathetic consideration to the proposals submitted by the President. We agree with him that the labor-management problem is a question which will require further study. The sense of true of the recommendations with respect to the proposal for compulsory arbitration of disputes arising from collective bargaining contracts.

I will submit those recommendations of the President to the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, which opens on Jan. 20 in Miami, for determination of the AFL's future policy on these questions.

The remaining points of the President's program will probably be the subject of serious study, but there are plenty of vacant tenant shacks on the cotton plantations while elsewhere housing is not to be found."

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Truman Text on Labor

Washington, D. C.—A partial text of President Truman's address to the 80th Congress on the State of the Union regarding labor-management relations follows:

The year just past—like the year after the First World War—was marred by labor-management strife.

Despite the continuance of economic warfare in 1946, we are today producing goods and services in record volume. Nevertheless, it is essential to improve the machinery for reaching agreement between labor and management and to reduce the number of strikes and lockouts.

We must not, however, adopt punitive legislation. We must not, in order to punish a few, destroy collective bargaining laws which will restrict the proper rights of the many. Your government must not, under the stress of emotion, endanger our American freedoms by taking considered action which will lead to results not anticipated or desired.

We must remember, in reviewing the record of disputes in 1946, that management shares with labor the responsibility for failure to reach agreements which would have averted strikes. Failure by both parties to realize that industrial peace cannot be attained merely by legislation against labor unions.

We have had a decade and a half we have established a national labor policy in this country based upon free collective bargaining as the process for settling disputes between varying conditions.

This is still the national policy.

It should continue to be the national policy.

But as yet, not all of us have learned what it means to bargain freely and fairly. Nor have all of us learned to practice mutual responsibilities that accompany the right to bargain. There have been abuses and harmful practices which limit the effectiveness of our system of collective bargaining. Furthermore, we have lacked sufficient governmental machinery to aid labor and management in resolving differences.

Certain labor-management problems need attention at once and certain others, by reason of their complexity, require extensive preparation and study.

We should enact legislation to correct certain abuses and to provide additional machinery for collective bargaining. But we should also endeavor ourselves to the basic causes of labor-management difficulties.

To this end, I make the following proposals, and I propose to you and urge your cooperation in effecting the following four-point program to reduce industrial strife.

Point number one is the early enactment of legislation to correct certain unjustifiable practices.

First, the secret and unique problems of the railroads and the public industries affecting the public interest. I recommend that the Congress promptly examine into the question of how to best prevent such strikes without endangering our general democratic freedoms.

Upon a proper solution of this problem depends in large part the welfare and future of the United States. The railroads and the public utilities affect strikes in such industries as transportation, fuel, power, and communications can result in national disaster. We have been able to avert such disaster, in recent years, only by the use of extraordinary powers and if such powers will soon be gone. In their place we must devise and install a adequate system and effective machinery to deal with these disputes. This task will require careful study and a bold approach, but it can be accomplished with the preservation of the rights of our people. The need is pressing. I recommend that action be taken at the earliest attention.

Second, the best methods and procedures for carrying out the collective bargaining process. These should include the responsibilities of labor and management to deal with each other fairly with each other, and to refrain from strikes or lockouts until all possibilities of negotiation have been exhausted.

Third, the underlying causes of labor-management disputes.

Some of the subjects presented here for investigation involve long-range study. Others can be considered immediately by the Congress and its recommendations can be submitted to the next session of the Congress.

I recommend that this Commission make its first report, including specific legislative recommendations, not later than March 15, 1947.

AFL PRINTERS IN CHICAGO WIN IMPORTANT RAISE

Chicago.—The Chicago local of the A F L International Typographical Union, consisting of a membership of 2,500, was granted wage increases ranging from 6 to 8½ cents an hour in agreement offered by the Franklin Association of Chicago and accepted by the members. The vote was 1,040 to accept and 218 against, the agreement to extend to next December 31.

The pay of print shop workers will be increased from $1.81½ to $2.31 an hour, and night workers from $1.91½ to $2.53 an hour. The wage hike is retroactive to 14 weeks, and the contract provides for a 36½-hour week and paid holidays will be increased from three to six a year.

Green Asserts Punitive Bills No Key; Asks Barring Jurisdictional Strikes

Washington, D. C.—President Truman submitted to Congress the labor program he designed to promote "greater harmony between labor and management."

The President emphasized in his annual "State of the Union" message that industrial peace cannot be achieved merely by punitive legislation against unions. He declared that "sound and democratic freedoms" are endangered in the process through the enactment of "ill-considered action."

In emphasizing these fundamental principles, the President has stood by several statesmanship and has rendered a great service. Hasty and ill-considered action by Congress in regard to labor will accomplish more harm than good.

The American Federation of Labor will give careful and sympathetic consideration to the proposals submitted by the President. We agree with him that the labor-management problem is a question which will require further study. The sense is true of the recommendations with respect to the proposal for compulsory arbitration of disputes arising from collective bargaining contracts.

I will submit those recommendations of the President to the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, which opens in Miami, for determination of the AFL's future policy on these questions.

The remaining points of the President's program will probably be the subject of serious study, but there are plenty of vacant tenant shacks on the cotton plantations while elsewhere housing is not to be found."

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Represented in the negotiations were Locals 705, 743 and 781 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (AFL).

Senate Republicans Back Plan For Swift Action on Case Bill

Washington, D. C.—Swift hearings on a revised Case anti-labor bill, as a to starting point of broad revision of the labor legislation, was agreed upon by the Senate Republican conference.

A toughened draft of the Truman-vetoed measure was announced by a three-man GOP group, preparatory to quick action by the Senate Labor Committee. Senator Ball, Republican, of Minnesota, a coauthor of the draft, is understood to be scheduled to testify on "best practices in collective bargaining" before the Taft-Ball-Smith conciliation Service needed funds for its expanded responsibilities.

The AFL head declared that, if there is to be a general peace, both labor and management must live up to their obligations as set forth in the contracts they sign.

It was learned that a bill designed to stop the flood of portal-to-portal pay suits may later be added to the Republican program.

A separate bill outlawing making union responsible for acts of a few employment (closed shop) will be introduced by Senator Taft, Republican.

A report to the conference, by Ball, Taft and Pulling, was that hearings on the Republican proposals last year for a joint committee of both and study of the whole range of labor laws.

Said the report:

"Such an investigation would take many months, even years, to produce legislation. We do not have the time for that, since the subcommittee is now under the GOP control and action should be taken in the present session. The problems on which we have been adequately considered in the first session."

Strategy green-lighted by the GOP conference thus called for "brief hearings" and prompt action on the strengthened Case bill, and for more extended" hearings on at least two additional bills. These would:

1. Provide "several alternative" solutions for industry-wide shutdowns, such as the present steel strike.

2. Amend the NLRB Act to define "unfair labor practices" for unions as well as employers.

3. Outlaw secondary boycotts.

4. Specific authority for employers to sue unions for violation of contracts in Federal district courts.

5. Prohibit "featherbedding" practices, such as the present musicians' strike.

6. Provide a 60-day cooling-off period before strikes are indefinitely and his insistence that such disputes be settled by peaceful means." Whether prohibitory legislation to deal with labor problems is a question which will require further study. The sense is true of the recommendations with respect to the proposal for compulsory arbitration of disputes arising from collective bargaining contracts.

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4,800,000 MORE ELIGIBLE FOR OLD-AGE BENEFITS

Washington, D. C.—An additional 4,800,000 workers were estimated by officials of the Social Security Administration to have come into at least minimum coverage for insurance automatically by the turn of the year.

These workers were in covered employment, however, the retirement benefits for themselves or survivor benefits for their families will gradually decline although in each case will an individual benefit or the total of family benefits fall below $10 a month.